

And a neat touch of the old picturesque, approaching idyllic prose, worthy of Sir Thomas Overbury, appears in these words of Sir Christopher Musgrave :—

The county of Kent furnishes us with the choicest fruit ; Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire with corn ; Lincolnshire, Essex, and Surrey with beef, veal, and mutton ; Buckinghamshire with wood for fuel, and the river with all that the seas and the rest of the world affords. In a word, all the useful and superfluous things that Nature produces, or the wit of man has invented, are to be found here, either made by our artificers, or imported by our merchants.

It also contains one or two bits of rough jesting and some sallies of touchy tempers, which seem to be recorded with all their strength of heated passion in the words. Take, for example, this strikingly described scene :—

What account, said he (Sir Edward Seymour), should we make of Scotland, so often trampled under foot by our armies ? Of late years, did not the very scum of our nation conquer you ? Yes, said I, after they had, with our assistance, conquered the king and the nobility and gentry of England ; and yet that, which you call a conquest, was a dispute between parties, and not a national quarrel. It was, said he, inseparable from the fortune of our Edwards to triumph over your nation. Do you mean Edward of Carnarvon, said I, and his victory at Bannockburn ? No, replied he, I mean Edward the First and Third, whose heroic actions no princes have ever equalled. Sure, said I, you do not mean the honour of the first, or the humanity of the third, so signally manifested at Berwick ; nor the murder of Wallace by the first Edward, or the poisoning of Randolph, Earl of Murray, by the third, after they had both refused to give battle to those heroes ?

His ever-memorable remark about national ballads occurs in this "Account of a Conversation," and in this way :—

Even the poorer sort of both sexes (said Sir Christopher) are daily tempted to all manner of lewdness by infamous songs sung in every corner of the streets. One would think, said the Earl, this last were of no great consequence. I said I knew a very wise man so much of Sir Christopher's sentiment, that he believed if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation. And we find that most of the ancient legislators thought they could not well reform the manners of any city without the help of a lyric, and sometimes of a dramatic poet.

It is noteworthy that this proverbial saying is said to have been quoted by Fletcher from "a very wise man," though it has long been attributed to Fletcher's own self. In the records of our old authors such a remark is not to be found, and universal belief has fixed the authorship upon him. It was pro-

bably with a little stern egotism that he referred to himself as being "a very wise man." This remarkable saying has been said to have been uttered by men as widely separated as Burns and Cobbett. In our literature this was the earliest acknowledgment of the power of ballads. But the fact that in Scotland the kings kept bards and *jongleurs* who strolled about the country singing their ballads at burgh street corners, among villagers, and at farmhouses, goes to show that the author of that happy saying was a Scot. In Scotland at that time ballads alone formed the literature of the people. They were their songs, and to their music they danced. Their directness and simplicity show us that, if not written by, they were at least written for, the people. Over the country they grew like wild flowers. Satiric-smiling pasquils spread over the land like briar roses. Ballads breathed the hopes and fears of the people, and went straight to their hearts ; their highest and holiest matters were said in the old minstrelsy ; in times of national wars and national troubles, their strains stirred the people's blood like trumpet sounds ; and the burdens of their loves and sorrows found meet expression in the sweetness of their own songs. Down in the Borders the ballads were the best, and it is not improbable that Fletcher had them in his memory when his lips spoke of their power. And, strange to say, the lives and manners of these Border marauders, bold and brave and hearty in their lawlessness, agree to a nicety with the burdens and descriptions of their popular ballads. The spirit of lawless daring, a light laughing scorn of personal danger, gladdens their lives, and the music is full of the clanking noise of gallant moss-troopers returning from the Borders with flocks of sheep and heads of cattle, with Englishmen in pursuit waving their spears and lances, and the ringing yelp of a bloodhound on the rieviers' track.

With the true reformer's spirit, Fletcher saw that real progress has first to be made in the national heart. It was another way of expressing that he would rather have been Homer than Alexander the Great. And in his own country it receives a home-thrust in pointed facts. Burns did more for Scotland than all the lawmakers of

the Scottish Conventions or the Scottish Parliament. The sentiment possesses not a little of the genuine power of culture. Half a truth, though it may be, as most sayings are, it has long passed current on the people's lips, and found lodgment in their hearts; and, proverb-like, it is as full of meaning and as fresh in spirit to-day as when it was spoken two centuries ago. It is singular that Meusnier de Querlon intended writing the history of his country by a chronological series of songs and ballads; and our Gallic neighbours will be among the first to appreciate the rough truth that lies in the words of the honest Scot. The glowing passion of the "Scots wha hae" has and ever will stir the hearts of Scotchmen as no other song can; the spirited words of the "Marseillaise" will long exercise its marvellous influence over the French after "The Feast of Pikes" is forgotten by them; and the national voice with which King Henry was greeted on his return from Agincourt with the lines thus opening—

Oure kynge went forth to Normandy,

is not lost, and still rises occasionally to the old ballad notes. And happy indeed is that country which has got a wealth of simple ballads, bright with generous thoughts, and set to the rapturous music of common language, for the meet expression of the national feeling.

JAMES PURVES.



Extracts from ye Gild Book of the Barber-Surgeons of York.



THIS is a quaint book we have before us, and beautifully got up too, with its illuminated portraits of every sovereign that has ruled in England from Henry VII. to George II. It is all in manuscript on vellum, written in Gothic characters, and besides the constitutions of the gild, it has annexed some wonderful diagrams of cabalistic and medical lore; an essay on the letting of blood, and an essay on cures for the pestilence.

But we will for the present deal with the

constitutions of the gild, which bring before us something of the life of those days; we can see the barbers and the surgeon hurrying to the council of their gild held in the "room on Ouse Bridge," their gown on for fear of the fine. Ouse Bridge must have been somewhat like London Bridge in those days, covered with houses. There they would meet the members of other gilds in the fine old Gild Hall down by the water's edge; and very particular were these barbers and surgeons of York not to allow any interference with their craft, nor quack vendors of unauthorized drugs would they tolerate; they and they alone were licensed to kill, cure, and shave the good citizens of the then capital of the North.

This book tells us on its title-page that it was begun in 1486, in the second year of the reign of King Henry VII., William Chymney being Mayor of the City of York and administers to all whose names should be inscribed therein the following oath:—

Ye shall swear to be trusty and true unto the King our Sovereign Lord, and to this City of York, and also to the science of Barbers and Chirurgie within the same, and all good ordinances, statutes, usages, and customs heretofore made and used the same art or science ye shall keep, support, maintain at all times to your power, and the seal and counsel of the same art ye shall truly keep and learn. So help you God, and by the contents of this Book.

In the year 1592 at the request and expense of the whole company the articles of the gild were expanded and corrected and from these we can form a fairly correct idea of the working of the confraternity.

Two searchers were annually appointed on the Monday after the Nativity of St. John the Baptist: in this year they were Master Henry Leach and Master George Dimmi. Their duties were very onerous, the whole superintendence of the gild rested on their shoulders, on going out of office they had to "render their accounts unto the Master of the said art of all things belonging to the gild upon pain of a fine of 6s. 8d. to the chamber and the company."

The searchers had to warn all the members of the art of the occasions on which they should appear in the Gild Hall, 6s. being the fine for non-attendance after warning had been received.

Then the searchers saw to the carrying out of the following article:—

Every man of the said art when he first sets up to keep shop as a member shall first be a freeman of the city, and then searched by the said searchers, whether he will be able to occupy as a member or no, and if the searchers approve him able, then at the first setting up as a member he shall pay 18s. 4d. except the sons of franchised men), and if he be found unable then he shall give such a convenient time with some brother of the said science, as shall be appointed and set down by the searchers.

Again, if any man before the term of his apprenticeship had expired did "presume to set up as a member not being admitted, shall be lawful for the searchers to take away his basins or other signs which he hath towards the street to shew his art, and to carry them to the chamber on Ouse Bridge to the Lord Mayor," and this functionary had to settle the fine the delinquent was to pay.

Also the searchers had to see that the members hired no servant "to practice this art above six days" without a proper license, the penalty being 6s. 8d. for doing so.

About aliens and strangers practising the art in York, the searchers had to be very strict; if a man presumed to shave or to deal in York for more than five days he had to pay a fine of 2s. per diem for each day beyond that limit.

Then the searchers had to search into and examine all manner of cures, and to see that the cures were consistent with the then accepted rules of chirurgery, and if any brother of the gild "do utter or give any indecent words to the searchers" in the exercise of their office, then he laid himself open to a fine of 3s. 4d. Furthermore, if any member of the art was found obstinate, and refused to come to the hall of the assembly without his gown, then he had to pay a fine of 6d.

They were very strict on the matter of medical etiquette, as the following item proves: "None of the said company shall intrude himself into the company of any other brother, who is dressing of any patient either wounded or hurt, except he be specially requested by the patient or by some friend of his, upon pain of 6s. 8d. to the uses of the guild, and also no barber shall powle, trim, or shave any of his brothers' customers until such time as the

said brother be fully contented and paid, upon fine and forfeiture of the same sum."

Regulations about the Sabbath day are likewise set down. "It is ordered that none of the barbers shall work or keep open their shop on Sunday except two Sundays next or before the assize weeks." 10s. to be paid for breaking this rule. This seems to have been a rule liable to be broken, for in 1676 there was another law laid down against Sabbath breaking to the following effect:—

This court taking notice of several irregular and unreasonable practices committed by the company of Barber-Surgeons within this city, in shaving, trimming, and cutting of several strangers as well as citizens' hair and faces on the Lord's day, which ought to be kept sacred, it is ordered by the whole consent of this court, and if any brother of the said company shall at any time hereafter either by himself, servant, or substitute, tonse, barb, or trim any person on the Lord's Day in any Inn or other public or private house or place, or shall go in or out of any such house or place on the said day with instruments used for that purpose, albeit the same cannot be positively proved, or made appear, but in case the Lord Mayor for the time being shall upon good circumstances consider and adjudge any such brother to have trimmed or barbed as is aforesaid, that then any such offender shall forfeit and pay for every such offence 10s.: one-half to the Lord Mayor, and the other to the use of the said company, unless such brother shall voluntarily purge himself by oath to the contrary, and the searchers of the said company for the time being are to make diligent search in all such as aforesaid public or private places for discovery of such offenders.

Another regulation about Sabbath breaking is worthy of note:—"If any brother of the said company shall resort to any Inn or Tavern or Alehouse upon the Sabbath day, or other holiday, in time of divine service or sermon, he shall pay a fine of twelve pence."

If one brother absented himself from the funeral of another without good and reasonable excuse he had to pay 3s. 4d.

Regulations about apprentices of course were very minute, as out of apprentices sprang the future members of the gild. At first he must be the son of a freeman, or else a fine was imposed upon him. This regulation was, however, in later days abolished. Indentures, recorded by the clerk of the company, had to be drawn up for each apprentice eight days after entering the service of his master. And if any apprentice or servant were convicted of stealing from his master any goods

over the value of 6*d.*, he was "to be clearly discharged forth of the said company for ever at the discretion of the then Lord Mayor."

At the recording of every apprentice twelve pence was to be paid into the stock or common fund of the gild, over which the searchers held jurisdiction, and every member paid 3*d.* quarterly "towards the increase of the said stock." Also at the receiving of his oath each member paid twelve pence, and out of this common stock the expenses of the gild were liquidated: the fees due to the searchers, the fees to the clerk or attorney, and the expenses of their establishment.

Then last, and in the eyes of many doubtless not least, of this draft of 1592 was the following:—

It is agreed by a general consent of the company of Barber-Surgeons that from henceforth the antient head searcher upon the election day shall make the whole company a dinner, and every person paying 6*d.* a-piece of their own charge, and the surplusage (if any such be) to be paid out of the stock.

On the 8th day of June, 1614, the Council of Barber-Surgeons sat again on Ouse Bridge to add further rules and regulations to the above. They are eleven in number, and being clearer in statements than those of the former, I will quote them as they stand:—

1. That the company of chirurgeons every year shall chose one of the said company to be the master in anatomy, which said master shall have the disposing of all things belonging to the said anatomy, as also the keeping of all things pertaining to the dissection of the same, and to make account of those things at the ending of his year, and to deliver them up to the company, and they to the next master elected.

2. That the said master so chosen be a licensed chirurgeon, and twice in the term of the said year the said master shall read a lecture either in anatomy or chirurgery, and if he so refuse to do he shall pay for every such refusal 10 shillings to the use of the Lord Mayor and Corporality of the said city, to be levied by distress or to be recovered by action of debt by the town clerk of the said city for the time being in the King's Majesty's Court to be holden before the sheriff of the said city, wherein no wages of law shall be allowed for the defendant.

3. Every dissection to be attended by the whole company, and they that shall willingly or wilfully at any time (if in any sort he profess chirurgery) absent themselves, not having a reasonable excuse, shall be fined for every default 3*s.* 4*d.* to the aforesaid uses, and to be levied and recovered in manner aforesaid.

4. The said master at every dissection shall ap-

point such of the licensed chirurgeons as he shall like best of to dissect the said anatomy, and if they refuse so to do, to pay for every time they deny 5*s.* as aforesaid.

5. The said master shall describe to such as he shall appoint to dissect (if they be unskilful in dissection of that part) the rising circumference at insertion of the said part, which if he do not, the requesting him thereunto, he shall pay 3*s.* 4*d.* as aforesaid.

6. That the said master, and two searchers for the time being, shall call before them (having such other company as they think fit to assist them) all such be strangers and others unlicensed, practising chirurgery in the city, to examine them, and finding them insufficient, or refusing to be examined, to forfeit and pay for every time offending 20*s.* to aforesaid purpose.

7. Every one of the said company professing chirurgery shall read a lecture either in chirurgery or anatomy to the whole company out of some author of chirurgery or anatomy as shall be appointed, the master of anatomy and by one of the searchers being a licensed chirurgeon, which if he refuse (having had reasonable warning to provide for the said reading), from such time not to practise the art of chirurgery till he perform the reading of the said lecture upon pain to pay for every time not reading a lecture 20*s.* to purposes aforesaid.

8. Every chirurgeon within a month after he made free shall likewise read a lecture unto the whole company out of some author as appointed, upon pain of 20*s.* fine.

9. Every one professing chirurgery and living within the city, or others coming to this city being licensed otherwise, shall either become freemen of the city and company within 3 months after their coming or else avoid the city, and pay for the month they remain after 40*s.* as aforesaid.

10. That none unlicensed or such as can give reason for the cure they undertake, as to have knowledge of the causes and signs thereof, or none understand not the virtues of such medicines as apply, whether they be simple or compound, take money for their medicines, shall practise chirurgery upon pain to forfeit for every time 20*s.* as aforesaid.

11. Every freeman or woman of this city taking or using, or suffering their children or servants to take or use, the counsel or help of any stranger any other unworthy professor or unlicensed chirurgeon, having not first had and used the counsel or help of the free licensed chirurgeons of this city (bone-setters excepted) shall forfeit for every time doing 40*s.* to the aforesaid uses.

There are the decrees of one or two of the gild entered in this book, relative to the precedence of the master of anatomy, who was adjudged to rank before the searcher, and to the vexed question of apprentices. Then follow the names of those who are entered in the gild, the last being in 1782.

J. THEODORE BELL